



Customer Service *Connections*

A publication of Saint Paul Regional Water Services

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set by each city***

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\$6.36 charge
for?***

***To Serve You
Better***

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SPRWS honored for management excellence by national water agency

Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) has been recognized for management excellence. We received the Platinum Award for Sustained Competitiveness Achievement from the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA).

SPRWS is one of only nine large water systems in the country to be honored in 2006 with the Platinum Award, which recognizes long-term excellence in utility management. The award was presented to Steve Schneider, general manager of SPRWS, at a ceremony held on October 17, 2006, in Charleston, South Carolina.

"The Platinum Award winners have established a track record of management excellence, continuously applying best management practices to meet the public's requirements for safe water and low-cost service," said AMWA President

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From left, Greg Kleindl, Board of Water Commissioners, and Steve Schneider, general manager, SPRWS, receive the Platinum Award for Sustained Competitiveness Achievement from Mark Premo, president, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, at the AMWA annual conference Oct. 17, 2006.

Board of Water Commissioners, City Council approve water rate increase for 2007

The Board of Water Commissioners and the Saint Paul City Council have approved an increase for the 2007 water rates. This will result in the average rate of \$1.66 per billing unit, increasing to \$1.75 in the cities of Saint Paul, Falcon Heights, Maplewood and West St. Paul. For an average household, it would amount to an additional \$7.92 per year for their drinking water. In the other cities served by SPRWS, the average rate of \$1.99 per unit will increase to \$2.10. One billing unit is equal to 100 cubic feet or 748 gallons of water.

The adjustment in rates is due in part to increased operational costs resulting from many factors including inflation and increased maintenance of our water system. Other factors include an increase in our debt service costs for our capital improvement program and an overall decrease in water consumption in our service area. The revenues we receive for the water and services we provide fund all of SPRWS activities. We will continue our efforts in providing our customers with reliable, quality water and services at a reasonable cost.

Our mission is to provide reliable, quality water and services at a reasonable cost.

To Serve You Better

Saint Paul Regional Water Services offers **several payment options**. If you need help to decide which method is best for you, just give us a call. A Customer Service Representative will be happy to discuss each option in detail.

●
Direct payment plan. Never write another check for your water services, and never again worry about paying your bill on time. Join nearly 10,000 other SPRWS customers and **have the amount due deducted electronically from your checking or savings account**. You'll still receive a statement, but it will indicate which date each payment will be deducted from your account.

●
Drop boxes. For next-day processing, use the **McCarrons Center drop box**, located at 1900 Rice Street (open 24 hours). For 48-hour processing, the **downtown drop box** is located at Saint Paul City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; visitors must pass through security.) [Checks or money orders only, please.](#)

●
In-person transactions. To pay your bills in person, walk into the **McCarrons Center office**, 1900 Rice Street, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We accept checks, money orders, cash, and can make credit arrangements.

●
Questions? Call Customer Service at 651-266-6350.

\$6.36 charge goes to Safe Drinking Water Act

On your last quarterly bill, a fee of \$6.36 appeared, designated for the Safe Drinking Water Act. This fee is added to your bill annually on Oct. 1; in 2005, the fee was \$5.21. SPRWS is directed by the State of Minnesota to collect this charge with your water bill.

The money goes to the Minnesota Department of Health to test all drinking water in the state; it is mandated as part of Phase V of the Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Act.

Sewer charges are set by city, either by water use or a flat rate

Many communities served by SPRWS contract with us to include their sanitary sewer charges on the water bill. Not having to send out a separate bill to each residence saves them time and money. Each city independently determines its own sewer rates and, based on the city you live in, you will be charged a different rate. The back of your bill outlines the rates for your area and includes the phone number you can use to ask questions about specific rates.

In Maplewood and Saint Paul, the sewer charges for single and two-family homes are set in the first quarter of the year: January, February, and March. The charges are pro-rated to a 91-day standard, which is the average number of days in the quarter. It is the water you use during this time that sets the maximum sewer charge you will pay for the rest of the year. In the remaining three billing cycles, you will pay sewer charges based on the water you actually use during those quarters, or the charges set during the first quarter, whichever is less. In any one year, you will not pay more for

sewer than the charges determined in the first quarter. Using the first quarter sanitary sewer charge as a maximum charge saves you money; it is also fairer to our consumers. The practice is based on the assumption that, during the summer months, water usage increases due to lawn and garden watering. Unlike laundry and showers in the home, water used outdoors does not return to the sanitary sewer system.

The cities of Lauderdale, West Saint Paul, and Falcon Heights set a flat rate for residential accounts that averages out the year-round use; if you live in one of these communities, higher summer and lower winter use is already factored into your charges.

The city of Mendota Heights takes care of its own sanitary sewer billing as do the communities where we service just a few water accounts, including Lilydale, Mendota, Newport, Roseville, South St. Paul, or Sunfish Lake. You are billed separately for sewer services if you live in one of those communities.

SPRWS honored for excellence

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Mark Premo, general manager of Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility. "Improvement gains from effectiveness and efficiency have been reinvested to enhance quality, increase customer satisfaction, and control rates," he said.

Platinum Award winners are all previous Gold Award winners who have successfully maintained and expanded their competitiveness initiatives, such as benchmarking, charting new financial courses, and meeting new strategies for meeting an ever-expanding array of customer service needs and expectations. SPRWS won the Gold Award in 2001.

In winning the Platinum Award, SPRWS was acknowledged for updating its strategic plan and capital improvement program; developing an IT Roadmap, which set out a five-year strategic plan for ongoing technology improvements; and reducing operations and maintenance costs by \$2.4 million over five years without employee layoffs, undue increases in water rates, or a decrease in services.

AMWA is the organization for the nation's largest publicly owned drinking water utilities. Its members provide safe and clean drinking water to more than 120 million Americans.